

ICPS newsletter

France is ready to lend a helping hand with administrative reforms in Ukraine

One of the most influential countries in the world, France actively promotes European integration with respect to both candidate countries and its own domestic reforms. Ukraine should appreciate the opportunity of having such a mighty partner. Besides, Ukraine and France have a similar political, administrative, and territorial structure, which is exceptionally effective in conducting administrative reforms. Last week, invited by the Embassy of France in Ukraine and supported by ICPS, Jacques Fournier—a member of the State Council of the French Republic, and a chevalier of the Legion of Honour—arrived in Ukraine. The objective of his visit was to draft a proposal for a long-term project of bilateral technical cooperation between France and Ukraine in the administrative reforms sector

France's experience is valuable for Ukraine

Cooperation with France in conducting administrative reforms is tremendously important for Ukraine. The particularities of the political, administrative, and territorial structure of France resembling those of Ukraine are the following:

- France is a unitary state. Simultaneously, certain regions of the country contrast dramatically in their development level and economic specialisation. Hence, there is a need to ensure the independence of regions, and concurrently to ensure consistency in conducting overall government policy;
- France is a presidential and parliamentary republic (so-called mixed system of public administration). It frequently happens that the President, who is the head of the government, and the parliamentary majority, which forms the government, represent different political parties, and hence, differing political interests. That requires seeking compromises and ways of cooperating in order to conduct a uniform government policy.

Ukraine's declared strategic goal is integration into the European Union, which will demand implementation of EU standards in all the spheres of public life. From this viewpoint, that makes the experience of France particularly

valuable, as these standards are already in place and have stood the test of time.

France is ready to foster cooperation with Ukraine in three key areas:

- support of institutional, administrative, and judicial reforms that envisage, particularly, the development of institutional capacities of agencies of the executive and judicial authorities, and also promoting the establishment of civil society as an inherent part of democracy;
- modernisation of the economy, which includes intensive cooperation in the sphere of agricultural policy and participation of Ukrainians in the presidential program of training managers for Ukrainian enterprises;
- offsetting the adverse effects of the transition period through implementing social measures.

In France, a Committee on Project Orientation, Coordination, and Selection is responsible for developing such projects. This is an inter-departmental organisation chaired by the Minister of European Affairs, which includes members of all ministries having a stake in cooperating with Central European countries. The major function of the Committee is setting priorities of bilateral cooperation and adopting decisions regarding financing or rejecting project proposals submitted for its

Jacques Fournier is a member of the State Council of the French Republic, and a chevalier of the Legion of Honour. Mr. Fournier possesses extensive work experience in the public sector in France. In the 1980s, he held the office of General Secretary of the Government and Deputy General Secretary of the Presidential Administration of Francois Mitterand. Later, he presided over the national association of railways and the state-owned enterprise Gaz de France. He is the author of scholarly papers on social problems, political struggle, and institutions, the power of society, how the government functions, and others.

Next week events

On 5 March 2002, a seminar on the **"Canadian approach to regional development"** will take place at ICPS and will be led by Brian Dick, Vice-President of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA, translated in Ukrainian as the Canadian Agency for Regional Development). Formerly, Brian Dick worked as a Senior Policy Analyst with the Ministry of Economic and Regional Development of Canada, as well, he held the position of Senior Analyst on Development Issues in the Ministry of Industrial Development in Newfoundland.

The mission of ACOA [Canadian Agency for Regional Development] is to boost economic development through improving conditions for conducting business, by way of cooperation with the population. Founded in 1987, the agency offers a wide range of programs and services. The Agency ensures accessibility of resources and tools to stimulate entrepreneurial activity during the whole business development cycle—from the moment of adopting the decision to found a company up to

planning its restructuring or expansion. The ACOA's core goals are (1) facilitating comprehensive research and analysis of the policy of local authorities with the aim of creating better economic conditions in regions; and (2) rendering services to small and medium-size enterprises in order to stimulate their growth and competitiveness.

The seminar will be held under the umbrella of the project "Network for Policy Development in the Government of Ukraine", which is a joint initiative of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine's Secretariat and the International Centre for Policy Studies and is carried out under the framework of the Policy Advice for Reforms (PAR) project of the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE), funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Last week's events

NGO will promote corporate governance. Last week, a roundtable "Interaction of non-governmental organisations for promoting corporate governance" was held at the International Centre for Policy Studies. This event was carried out under the framework of ICPS's project "Evaluation of amendments in economic legislation" funded by the Centre for International Private Entrepreneurship. The talk was arranged jointly by ICPS and the Ukrainian Association of Investment Business (uaib.com.ua).

During the roundtable, its participants set the following key objectives of cooperation among non-governmental organisations to foster corporate governance:

- increasing the role of non-governmental organisations in developing legislation, sharing information regarding projects and works that are being executed;
- coordination of a common understanding of problems, and of strategies to overcome them;
- selecting priority directions for interaction;
- application of international experience in coordinating interaction.

consideration by the Embassies of France in the respective countries.

How to build cooperation

The International Centre for Policy Studies commenced establishing its contacts with the French side last autumn, when under the framework of the project

"Institutional capacity to develop economic programs" representatives of the French Parliament conducted seminars on arranging cooperation between the government and parliament during law-making activities. Since then, talks were held on cooperation in the sphere of improving the system, economic forecasting, and strategic planning, upgrading qualifications of civil servants.

Last week, at the invitation of the Embassy of France in Ukraine and hosted by ICPS, Mr. Jacques Fournier, a member of the State Council of the French Republic, arrived in Kyiv and held two seminars at ICPS. Additionally, Mr. Fournier had a number of meetings in the Presidential Administration, the Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, and the country office of the World Bank. He also spoke with representatives of the Ministry of Economy and European Integration of Ukraine and the Ukrainian Academy of the Public Administration.

Mr. Jacques Fournier highlighted three possible routes of French assistance to Ukraine in the domain of administrative reforms which are underway in Ukraine:

- institutional support in distributing political and administrative functions within the system of public administration, and effective cooperation with the government, president, parliament, and civil society in the process of elaborating government policy and putting it into practice;
- the development of the system of indicative economic forecasting and strategic planning, closely related to the budget process;
- forming the higher-rank managerial apparatus and a new corporate culture of the civil service by way of developing the institution of state secretaries;

Mr. Fournier believes that the French experience in these issues can be valuable for Ukraine, as in France, since last summer the budget reform has been

initiated. From now on, the government will allocate funds for sectoral ministries solely for specific programs having well-defined targets. Apart from this, France has such institutions as the General Commissariat on Planning, the Statistical Committee of Economic Surveys under the President of France, and the Forecasting Directorate at the Ministry of Economy and Finance. Mr. Fournier believes that cooperation with these institutions might be of use for the newly created State Commission on Economic and Social Development Strategy, and the Ministry of Economy and European integration—which, apropos, has already established partner relations with its counterpart.

Mr. Fournier suggested the two principal forms of cooperation: (1) conducting a series of training discussion or seminars for several days, and (2) arranging internships for Ukrainian state officials in respective institutions across France. A particular emphasis should be dedicated to the creation of an efficient system of qualificatory requirements, selection procedures, preparation, and upgrading qualifications of civil servants.

Based on the results of his trip Mr. Fournier will prepare a proposal for cooperation project with the Ukrainian party. This April, the proposal will be considered by the Committee on Project Orientation, Coordination, and Selection of the French Republic. If the project proposal is approved, its implementation will be launched already this summer. ■

In one of the upcoming issues of the ICPS Newsletter we will report in more detail on the French experience in conducting administrative reforms and ways of implementing this experience in Ukraine proposed by Jacques Fournier.

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